



Galashiels Community Council
Zoom
Wednesday 2nd September 2020
6.30pm

Present

Judith Cleghorn, Tracey Alder, Rick Kenney, Bill White, Liz Jardine

Cllr Anderson

Cllr Jardine

Cllr Scott

Kevin Janiak

Callum Hodgson

3 Members of Public

1. Welcome and Apologies.

Judith welcomed everyone to the normal CC meeting

Apologies Cllr Aitchison Lorna Hanif, Marion and Richard Romeril, Eileen Frame, Dougie Johnston Gordon Richardson

2. Minutes Approval

An accurate Minute of the Meeting 5th February was approved by Liz Jardine and Seconded by Tracey Alder

3. Matters Arising

4. Police Update and Questions

Look in to getting a police presence via Harry Scott

5. Sub-groups Update

Gala in Bloom

Judith asked John Gray to give a brief overview of where we stand at the moment with the planting at Bank St and Old Gala House.

5 beds to be kept.

Make it more sustainable but still colour achievable with Perennials and Annuals.

Opinion is to look outside the box and not make the planting so regimental

Tracey Alder and John Gray got approval from the Community fund fast track an amount of just over £850 for waterers for the planters.

Old Gala House will retain some of its planting.

Judith voiced that during lockdown SBC did no grass cutting in Bank St and Old Gala House. £864 has already been paid out for grass cutting by a contractor.

Going forward, the Great Tapestry of Scotland is opening next year, and Judith added that apart from this there is nothing else to see in Gala so she would like to see the Town flooded with flowers as you will see in her report. We would need a public campaign and get everyone involved. Also get sponsorship and businesses involved. Judith asked if we should just go ahead or should we get approval from SBC, it was agreed to get approval first.

Tracey is contacting OSCR to see if we can get Charitable status, SBC have confirmed there is no reason why this cannot happen.

Meeting tomorrow for the Tapestry Way concept. Bill White has been looking at a concept for somewhere to take selfies.

Cllr Jardine said that there had been an issue with the Coulter's Candy Statues as they were starting move slightly, this has been fixed.

Gala Waterways

Liz had nothing to add.

Christmas Event and Lights

Their will be a light switch on, but it will be very low key

Galashiels Weekend Walking Festival

Tracey advised that obviously the Walking Festival had to be cancelled due to lockdown but we are hopefully hoping to have a 2 day event before Christmas and also a Cycle Event in January just to get a bit of monotony and enthusiasm back in to the Town and let our Annual Walkers know that we have not forgotten them.

Resilient Gala

The resilient response group via the 0800 number wound down August 15th If this needs to be set up again hopefully it will come under one umbrella group and led by Community Council

7. Chairs Comments

Welcome

Good evening everyone and welcome to our first official Community Council Meeting by Zoom. I am sure you will all be glad that we have started to come out of the pandemic and that a considerable number of the rules that have been in place, are now somewhat relaxed.

However, not all are, hence this meeting.

Our thanks must go to those who have been of particular help during the crisis – some of our community councillors have been taking emergency help calls, some delivering shopping and medications.

Others of us, myself included, have been concerned with getting funding for various needy causes – for instance to enable Cafe Recharge to provide cooked meals for the Food Bank, TD1 and Addaction among others. We have also been able to get funding to provide recreation packs for both children and their families and have worked with Scottish Borders Council and others on this part of the project.

Langlee Regeneration Project

Work has started again on this project and indeed my house is currently being refurbished externally – it would seem that we will be much warmer this winter with all the new insulation that is being put in. This project will take about two years to complete, and it will cause a great deal of dirt and inconvenience, but worth it in the end – we hope!!

New Project

As you are all aware, during lockdown, Scottish Borders Council did no grass cutting or gardening – leaving our town in a pretty awful state.

The situation has improved a little, but there is still a great deal to do. SBC are still not prepared to cut the grass in Bank Street gardens – and we, the Community Council, who have already paid out £864 to get this done, are still having to do so.

Now, whatever we think about the reasoning behind this, and however much we complain about it, it makes no difference – it is a fact – and I feel very strongly that we would be much better just getting on and doing it, doing what we can to keep our town tidy – moaning just does not help and we have to remember that SBC have had a few other things to deal with over the last few months.

Going forward, the Great Tapestry of Scotland will be opening in Galashiels next year, date to be confirmed, and there is a group meeting tomorrow evening of those interested and involved in improving and making beautiful the area which will be known as Tapestry Way – from the Interchange, through Douglas Bridge and up to the Tapestry building.

I do not think this is enough; I think we, as a town, should aim higher – as high as we can and as high as we deserve and I think we should still start at the Interchange, but look at all main areas of the town centre. I think we should flood the place with flowers, florally decorate the three central town bridges, the fences along by the old Fiori's restaurant and beside Argos; do something with Market Square; at various places in Channel Street and a floral tower on the triangular piece beside Dalgettys.

I know this project would cost a whole lot of money; I know it is unlikely we will get this from SBC and I know that we cannot expect our volunteers to cover all the work this project would bring – so the cost of local contractors would be built within the costs.

I think we should take on this project, not just because the Tapestry is coming, but for us. For the people of this town who have had to, like many other towns, to put up with miserable streets, no flowers, empty shops.

I would like your approval this evening to set this project in motion. All agreed

8. Treasurers Update

Full report next month

9. Secretary's Update

10. Planning and Licensing

Rick talked through the planning applications for this month. A new application in from EHA for originally 34 flats in Huddersfield Street now changed to 35

11. SBC Councillors Comments and questions

Cllr Jardine

10th October Gala Harriers Relay event taking place. 30 runners start and return to and leave from Scott Park.

Melrose Gait – a few ongoing issues up there but police are aware

Area Partnerships – a lot of positives have come out of these, but some negatives need to be ironed out, there doesn't seem to be any consistency.

Cllr Anderson

No other business

Cllr Scott

No other business

Comment made by member of public – Cemeteries are in a dreadful state

12. AOB

Date of next meeting Focus Centre- Wednesday March 4th 6.30pm – In the event of a further public election the meeting will reconvene at a date to be decided.